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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/056,864	10/26/2001	Jordan S. Bruntz	P05346US0	3780

27139 7590 11/05/2003

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EXAMINER

PERRIN, JOSEPH L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1746

DATE MAILED: 11/05/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/056,864

Applicant(s)

BRUNTZ ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph L. Perrin, Ph.D.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 October 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8 and 9 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2 and 5-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3-4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 October 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-7, drawn to an apparatus, classified in class 068, subclass 207.
 - II. Claims 8-9, drawn to a method for introducing water of different temperatures to a washing appliance, classified in class 008, subclass 158.
2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions II and I are related as process and apparatus for its practice.

The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus, such as an apparatus without a controller/control system, or by hand.
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, and because the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. During a telephone conversation with Applicant's representative, Mr. Michael Voorhees on 21 October 2003 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-7. Affirmation of this election must be

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made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 8-9 withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Specification

6. Applicant is reminded of the proper content of an abstract of the disclosure.

A patent abstract is a concise statement of the technical disclosure of the patent and should include that which is new in the art to which the invention pertains. If the patent is of a basic nature, the entire technical disclosure may be new in the art, and the abstract should be directed to the entire disclosure. If the patent is in the nature of an improvement in an old apparatus, process, product, or composition, the abstract should include the technical disclosure of the improvement. In certain patents, particularly those for compounds and compositions, wherein the process for making and/or the use thereof are not obvious, the abstract should set forth a process for making and/or use thereof. If the new technical disclosure involves modifications or alternatives, the abstract should mention by way of example the preferred modification or alternative.

The abstract should not refer to purported merits or speculative applications of the invention and should not compare the invention with the prior art.

Where applicable, the abstract should include the following:

- (1) if a machine or apparatus, its organization and operation;
- (2) if an article, its method of making;
- (3) if a chemical compound, its identity and use;
- (4) if a mixture, its ingredients;
- (5) if a process, the steps.

Extensive mechanical and design details of apparatus should not be given.

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7. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the technical disclosure of the claimed subject matter is not fully disclosed. Specifically, the term "coil" should be changed to either "prime mover" or "solenoid" as described in the specification and claims. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Objections

8. Claims 3-4 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form.

In claim 3, the ranges of temperatures are considered future intended use, and therefore, fail to provide any further structural limitation to the claimed apparatus. Moreover, the working temperatures are dependent upon externally supplied water sources, which may vary greatly in temperature.

In claim 4, which further depends on claim 3, the flow rates of the valves are considered future intended use, and therefore, fail to provide any further structural limitation to the claimed apparatus. Valve flow rates are easily and routinely adjusted for suitable use.

Accordingly, the claims have not been further treated on the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148

USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining

obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

11. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

12. Claims 1-2 and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 4,290,450 to Swanson in view of US 6,634,048 to Hornung *et al.* (hereinafter "Hornung").

Re claims 1-2 & 5, Swanson discloses a water valve with valve body (10) with hot and cold water inlets (81,85), outlet (76), solenoid-operated hot water valve (12), first solenoid-operated cold water valve (14), second solenoid-

operated cold water valve (16), and operating the solenoid valves "either individually or in combination" to achieve various water temperatures (see entire reference of Swanson, for instance, the abstract; Figures 1-3; col. 1, lines 62-64; col. 2, line 50 *et seq.*). Re claims 6-7, Swanson further discloses using the mixing valve in home appliances, specifically, washing machines (see, for instance, col. 1, lines 5-8).

Although Swanson does not expressly disclose using an automatic means, *i.e.* a controller, to operate the solenoids/valves, Swanson does disclose various combinations of actuating the solenoid-operated valves to achieve various mixed water temperatures (see, for instance, col. 1, line 64 – col. 2, line 10). Hornung teaches that it is known to utilize a control system (automatic temperature control system) to control solenoid-operated hot and cold water valves to achieve a desired water temperature for a clothes washer (see entire reference of Hornung, for instance, col. 2, lines 22-34; col. 3, lines 1-11).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a controller/control system to automate the actuation of the different valves to achieve various mixed water temperatures. Moreover, it has been held that broadly providing a mechanical or automatic means to replace manual activity which has accomplished the same result (*i.e.* achieve desired water temperature) involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Venner*, 120 USPQ 192.

Conclusion

13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

US 4,503,575 to Knoop *et al.*, which disclose an automatic liquid control system operating a hot/cold mixing valve.

US 3,591,130 to McCarty, which discloses a solenoid-controlled mixing valve.

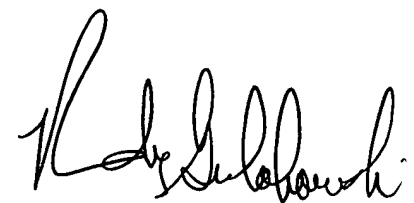
14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph L. Perrin, Ph.D. whose telephone number is (703)305-0626. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30-5:00, except alternate Fridays.

15. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Randy P. Gulakowski can be reached on (703)308-4333. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

16. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0661.

Joseph L. Perrin, Ph.D.
Examiner
Art Unit 1746

jlp



RANDY GULAKOWSKI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700